Sq. mtrs. NHB has entered into Memorandum of Understandings with the Governments of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra for extending financial assistance for resettlement of slum dwellers. Under the Home Loan Account Scheme of NHB, minimum, contribution has been kept as low as Rs. 30 per month.

[*Translation*]

Token Strike by Bank Employees

405. SHRI RAJVEER SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of days on which the employees of various Nationalised Banks went on token strike during the last one year alongwith the names of the banks and the reasons therefor; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to avoid the recurrence of such strikes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) According to Indian banks' Association, during the preceeding 12 months, no industry wide All India strike by employees in the Banking Industry has been reported to it. However, in individual banks, officers/workmen did observe token strike on different dates over local issues.

(b) Since strikes etc. are called by theUnion/associations, they cannot be averted by the Government alone. However, cancISIllations/dialogues with the unions are usually attempted by the Indian Banks Association/Management/Labour authorities to avert intended strikes.

[*English*]

Lending Rates for Agriculture Sector

406. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the credit policy announced by the Reserve Bank of India;

(b) whether the hike in the lending rates covers the agriculture sector also;

(c) if so, to what extent;

(d) whether the hike in lending rates for agriculture sector is in contravention of rates suggested by the Reserve Bank Committee on Agriculture and

(e) if so, the reasons for such increasing in lending rates for Agriculture sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had announced the credit policy for the second half of the financial year 1991-92 on October 8,1991. The Key changes made by RBI in the credit policy included a one percentage point increase in the Bank Rate, a 1.5 percentage point increase in lending rates, an increase in the shorter-term deposit rates, increase in export credit interest rate, liberalisation of export refinance and reduction in cash margins, withdrawal of certain refinance facilities and reduction in the interest rate on banks' cash balances with the Reserve Bank of India.

(b) to (e). The lending rates of scheduled commercial banks have been raised across the board by 1.5 percentage points with effect from October 9, 1991. Thus, lending rates now range from 11.5 per cent to 20. 00 per cent (minimum) as against 10.0 per cent to 18.5 per cent (minimum) hitherto. The lending rate structure is applicable to all bank borrowers including those belonging to agricultural sector and the concessionality in the rate is linked to the size of the loans. However, interest rates on term loans to